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Operational/TPENTITLE

DRAGON Biographic Sketches for BfV

REF EQQA-68391, 15 Sept. 1955

Attached are biographic sketches on TPENTITLE sources Ludwig HOPMAN and Kaspar GRAP. Please transmit this to BfV in accordance with the procedure outlined in referenced memorandum.

Attachments:
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SUBJECT: Biographic Sketch of Ludwig HOFMAN

1. Personal History

NAME : Ludwig Hofman

PLACE OF BIRTH : Erlenfeld/Schwaburg, near Frankfurt/Main, Germany

DATE OF BIRTH : 19 July 1912

WIFE : Lora, nee Riets, born 10 April 1917, in Mannheim, Germany

CHILDREN : Son - Gerhard, born 22 November 1936, in Buelman, Germany

Daughters - Gotlinda, born 30 November 1937, in Mannheim; Heidamarie, born 18 November 1941 in Berlin; Gabriele, born 10 October 1944 in Luekenwalde.

EDUCATION : 1918-1932 - Grammar and secondary schools in Erlenfeld, Aschaffenburg, and Weisshaus, Germany.
1932-1933 - Engineering school in Weimar and Mannheim, Germany, studying aircraft construction and design.

2. Employment Prior to Deportation

1933-1939 Glider pilot instructor and did test work on light sports aircraft.

1939-1944 Chief test pilot, Flettner Helicopter Company

1944-1945 Employed by chief test pilot, Argus & Bachem Aircraft Company. Flew the Me 262 and the ME 262.

May 1945- June 1945 After the cessation of hostilities, Hofman was employed by the USAF in Lechfeld/Augsburg in the checking-out of USAF pilots in the ME 262 aircraft. In June 1945, while on a ferrying flight with the ME 262 in France, Subject was forced to bail out because of an engine explosion of undetermined cause. Subject was severely injured in the jump and was hospitalized for one year in a U.S. hospital in Augsburg. After his release from the hospital, he could not gain employment with the American forces and requested he be sent to Berlin to join his wife and children.

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Early 1946-
Sept 1946

After Subject's arrival at Berlin/Blankensee in the Soviet Zone, he was instructed to register with the Soviet Headquarters in Potsdam as a resident of the East Zone. In searching for work, Subject reported to BAABN, who was with the Junkers Works in Dessau, and received a job as a test pilot. Subject did no flying here at this time but was told that a flying program was in the making.

15 Oct 1946 Subject, together with 12 other German specialists, was deported to the USSR by air.

3. Employment in USSR

Nov 1946-
spring '47

Hofman was assigned to Zavod #1 at Podberes'ye, USSR, but in November 1946 was sent off to the Air Research Institute at Ramenskoye Airfield near Moscow (LII). The purpose of his duty here was to be checked out in fighter-type aircraft and for subsequent duty as a test pilot for the EF-126. During this period he also acted as a pilot consultant for the design section headed by BAABN.

Summer '47-
spring '48

Hofman reported back to his home base in Podberes'ye, where he did no flying, but acted as a pilot consultant for the design section of Zavod #1 in Podberes'ye.

Spring '48-
spring '49

Hofman was again sent on temporary assignment to an airfield, but this time the field was located at Teply Stan near Moscow. Here he acted as a substitute pilot for another German pilot, named Schreiber.

Summer '49-
Sept '50

Hofman was again sent back to Podberes'ye where he was placed in the position of Chief of the Statics Lab of Zavod #1 in Podberes'ye but still acted as a pilot consultant to the Design Section of Zavod #1 at Podberes'ye.

Sept '50-
Sept '51

Hofman returned to flying status and was again sent on duty to an airfield called Borki located 15 kms north-east of Podberes'ye. Here he was engaged in the taxi and flight tests of the EF-155 aircraft.

Sept '51-
June '53

Hofman was sent back to Podberes'ye after completing his flight testing of the EF-155. During this period he did no work of any significance in Podberes'ye. In May 1952 his wife and family were repatriated, but he remained.

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June '53-
July '54

Hofman together with the remaining half of the Germans in Pedbaron'ye was transferred to Savelovo, USSR not far from Pedbaron'ye. Hofman was engaged in the arrangement of the instruments and equipment in the cockpit of a newly designed aircraft which the Soviets called the "152" being designed at Savelovo during this period. On 28 June 1954 Hofman together with the remaining Germans at Savelovo was repatriated to the DDR, arriving there on or about 4 July 1954.

8. Employment in DDR

July '54-
3 Oct '54

Upon Hofman's arrival in the DDR, the proposed DDR Aviation Minister Zeiler offered him the position of Chief DDR Test Pilot with a monthly salary of 3,000 MZK, with elaborate housing privileges and free educational provisions for his children. Subject did not refuse this offer but stated that he needed time to rest and to be with his family. During this entire time, he was waiting for an opportunity to defect to the West with his family. Subject related an experience here which, according to his statements, hastened his decision to defect. His story states that on 3 July 1954, subject together with about 200 other German specialists arrived in Pirna, DDR from the USSR. Among these specialists was a German whose name was Dr. Scheinhorst and whom Subject saw on or about 4 July 1954 for the last time.

After spending several weeks in recuperating and resting with his wife and children, Subject was approached by the East German criminal police on/a 20 July 1954 on the subject of harboring a western agent who had been recently arrested. In addition to being questioned, Subject also discovered that his house had been searched by unidentified individuals presumably East German criminal police. This conduct on the part of the Police was violently protested by Subject in his complaint to a member of the Central Committee of the SED, a German by name of ZEILER, whom Subject met for the first time in Savelovo in the USSR. Several weeks after the unpleasant encounter with the East German Criminal police and the house searching, the Subject received a phone call from ZEILER requesting that the former visit him at his office in East Berlin. Upon arrival there on 29 Sept 1954 ZEILER explained to Subject that it was he (Zeiler) who ordered the criminal police to pay him a visit in order to place him in a state of realization that he was being watched. ZEILER also explained that this was a normal procedure used on all key German personnel in order to keep them aware of the DDR's strict surveillance of its citizens. When Subject informed ZEILER of the fact that his apartment was also searched in his absence,

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SEILER denied any knowledge of this. Instead SEILER stated that he would check on the matter to see if this action was the work of some East German security agency. SEILER excused himself for the action of the Original Police and even promised to have the agent responsible for the visit severely punished for behaving in the crude manner in which he did. On or about 4 October 1954, SEILER informed the Subject that he would have to undertake a long trip on temporary duty. Hofman suspected that this duty involved going either to Poland or to Czechoslovakia for the purpose of introduction to and familiarization with aircraft activities there. SEILER also specifically told Hofman not to attempt to defect to the West since he would be watched. At this same time, Hofman received an invitation from a flying club in East Berlin to attend a meeting of aviation enthusiasts. Hofman seized this opportunity, and, on 4 October 1954, he sent his family to West Berlin and subsequently followed them to freedom.

5. Documentation

Documented in Sachsen on 20 October 1954 including West Zone Kennkarte.

6. Present Address

Buehl/Baden, Klotzbergstrasse 1

7. Present Employment

Stadiongesellschaft fuer Hubschrauber in Stuttgart/Echterdingen Airport.

8. Interview Comments

Although Hofman was a member of the NSDAP, he did not participate in any of its activities, since he was never interested in politics. During his interrogation he constantly reiterated that he defected to the West because he could no longer live under conditions in which he and his family enjoyed luxurious living while his countrymen could barely exist. He did not want his children to be raised under the Communist system and he could live no longer in constant fear of arrest and persecution. An additional consideration was the fact that his wife lived under a constant strain in the USSR and suffered intensely.

Although Hofman constantly spoke of freedom and his dislike for the Communist regime, the interrogator could not convince himself entirely of Hofman's good faith. During the course of the interrogation, there were no factual discrepancies in Hofman's statements nor

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any obvious indications of bad faith. However, he spoke too incessantly of freedom, peace, and his hatred of the Communist system and was not satisfied with allowing the interrogator to draw his own conclusions on the basis of given testimony. When Hofman was asked to permit the interrogator to speak with his wife on questions pertaining to economic conditions in the USSR, Hofman spoke of the terrible physical condition of his wife and the great psychological strain she would suffer in reminiscing. When assured that the interrogator would be careful not to bring up any questions which might disturb her, Hofman offered various other excuses to prevent his wife's interrogation. These same excuses for refusal were offered by Hofman when he was asked to allow his son to be interrogated. It is felt that any information which Hofman may give or has given in the past, should be viewed very critically and accepted only after careful and thorough consideration.

Comments from Other Sources

No derogatory reports have been received from other sources regarding subject; however, he attributes at least one refusal of employment by a prominent DBR chemical company to derogatory information supplied by his divorced wife. She may be furnishing such information out of spite.

Source A: This source believes that Dr. Scheuer is pro-West and that if he seemed sympathetic toward the USSR while in that country, it was only as a precaution in order to secure favorable treatment while under Soviet control. However, Source A also believes that Scheuer's move to the DBR was largely based on the extremely close friendship he had with Dr. Heinrich Elm and his wife who planned to come to the DBR. Source A's wife has described this friendship as being in reality a "marriage a trois". Source A further reports that after the move of both specialists to the DBR, their friendship deteriorated. One possible cause is that in seeking employment in the same plant, Elm was accepted by a number of companies which had no position for Scheuer. Source A reports however that the final break came during a heated argument at the home of Dr. Elm's wife's parents when Scheuer was accused of interfering in Elm's marriage. Scheuer has since remarried and is apparently happy with his new wife.

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